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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/884,200	06/19/2001	Donald E. Weder	8403.411	3758

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EXAMINER

GELLNER, JEFFREY L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3643

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/884,200

Applicant(s)

WEDER, DONALD E.

Examiner

Jeffrey L. Gellner

Art Unit

3643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 May 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5-10, 15, 21 and 22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 11-14, 16-20, 23-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Upon reconsideration of the corrected drawings, which have been approved, and in view of claim language, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

Drawings

The corrected or substitute drawings were received on 8 May 2003. These drawings are approved.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 3643

Claims 1-4, 12, 14, 16-20, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Wardwell (US 3,902,541).

As to Claim 1, Wardwell discloses a collapsible container (Figs. 1-5) comprising a plurality of rigid segments (14 of Fig. 4); and, means for connecting the rigid segments (18 of Fig. 3; col. 2 lines 9-13) such that the rigid segments define a sidewall (see Fig. 4) and such that the rigid segments are movable between an expanded position (Fig. 4) wherein the rigid segments cooperate with one another to form an object receiving space (see Fig. 3) and a collapsed position (see Fig. 1) wherein a first portion (defined as that part of the segments from the “top” of the segments in Figs. 1 and 4 to the apertures with string (16) of Figs. 1 and 4) of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the first portion are in a coplanar relationship to one another (portions are defined as coplanar in Figs. 1 and 4 in that the “ends” of any two or three portions are in the same plan. The container of Figs. 1 and 4 could be set on, say, a table top (a plane) where these particular segments would be in the same plane. Additionally, the “ends” of these portions as shown in Figs. 1 and 4 are in the same plane.) and a second portion (defined as that part of the segments from the “bottom” of any segments not chosen to have first portions in Figs. 1 and 4 to the apertures with string (16) of Figs. 1 and 4) of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the second portion are in a substantially parallel relationship (the first and second portions are parallel since they are on different segments in Figs. 1 and 4 and the segments are shown as parallel to the first portion of the rigid segments so that the sidewall is in a substantially flattened (defining Fig. 1 as flattened).

As to Claim 2, Wardwell further discloses the means for connecting comprising a flexible liner (18 of Fig. 3) attached to the rigid segments (col. 2 lines 9-11).

Art Unit: 3643

As to Claim 3, Wardwell further discloses an open upper end and closed lower end (see Fig.3).

As to Claim 4, Wardwell further discloses the liner a waterproof material (defining plastic as waterproof; col. 2 lines 9-11).

As to Claim 12, Wardwell further discloses the rigid segments with inner and outer surfaces, first and second longitudinal edges, and the edges angled so as to abuttingly engage one another (defining the rigid segments in Fig. 4 as abutting).

As to Claim 14, Wardwell further discloses the rigid segments with a substantially planar configuration (see Fig. 1).

As to Claim 16, Wardwell discloses a collapsible container (Figs. 1-5) comprising a flexible bottom panel (portion of 18 disclosed as bottom in Fig. 3); a plurality of rigid segments (14 of Fig. 4); and, means for connecting the rigid segments (18 of Fig. 3; col. 2 lines 9-13) such that the rigid segments define a sidewall (see Fig. 4) and such that the rigid segments are movable between an expanded position (Fig. 4) wherein the rigid segments cooperate with one another to form an object receiving space (see Fig. 3) and a collapsed position (see Fig. 1) wherein a first portion (defined as that part of the segments from the "top" of the segments in Figs. 1 and 4 to the apertures with string (16) of Figs. 1 and 4) of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the first portion are in a coplanar relationship to one another (portions are defined as coplanar in Figs. 1 and 4 in that the "ends" of any two or three portions are in the same plan. The container of Figs. 1 and 4 could be set on, say, a table top (a plane) where these particular segments would be in the same plane. Additionally, the "ends" of these

Art Unit: 3643

portions as shown in Figs. 1 and 4 are in the same plane.) and a second portion (defined as that part of the segments from the “bottom” of any segments not chosen to have first portions in Figs. 1 and 4 to the apertures with string (16) of Figs. 1 and 4) of the rigid segments is arranged so that the rigid segments of the second portion are in a substantially parallel relationship (the first and second portions are parallel since they are on different segments in Figs. 1 and 4 and the segments are shown as parallel to the first portion of the rigid segments so that the sidewall is in a substantially flattened (defining Fig. 1 as flattened).

As to Claim 17, Wardwell further discloses the means for connecting comprising a flexible liner (18 of Fig. 3) attached to the rigid segments (col. 2 lines 9-11).

As to Claim 18, Wardwell further discloses the flexible bottom panel as a portion of the flexible liner (see Fig. 3).

As to Claim 19, Wardwell further discloses an open upper end and closed lower end (see Fig.3) and the flexible bottom panel is the closed lower end of the flexible liner (see Fig. 3).

As to Claim 20, Wardwell further discloses the liner a waterproof material (defining plastic as waterproof; col. 2 lines 9-11).

As to Claim 24, Wardwell further discloses the rigid segments with inner and outer surfaces, first and second longitudinal edges, and the edges angled so as to abuttingly engage one another (defining the rigid segments in Fig. 4 as abutting).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3643

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 11 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wardwell (US 3,902,541) in view of Schorpp (US 1,426,916).

As to Claim 11, the limitations of Claim 1 are disclosed as described above. Not disclosed is the rigid segment made of metal. Schorpp, however, teaches the general concept of rigid segments made of metal (3 of Fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the container of Wardwell by making the rigid segments of metal as disclosed by Schorpp depending upon availability of material.

As to Claim 23, the limitations of Claim 16 are disclosed as described above. Not disclosed is the rigid segment made of metal. Schorpp, however, teaches the general concept of rigid segments made of metal (3 of Fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the container of Wardwell by making the rigid segments of metal as disclosed by Schorpp depending upon availability of material.

Claims 13, 25, 26, and 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wardwell (US 3,902,541) in view of Jannin (US 4,907,380).

As to Claim 13, the limitations of Claim 1 are disclosed as described above. Not disclosed are adjacent rigid segments having inner and outer lips which overlap when the segments are in the expanded position. Jannin, however, discloses a collapsible container that has inner and outer lips (see Fig. 5 for Examiner's inner and outer lips) which overlap (see Fig. 5)

Art Unit: 3643

when the segments are in the expanded position (see Fig. 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the container of Wardwell by having the rigid members with overlapping lips as disclosed by Jannin so as to strengthen the container.

As to Claims 25 and 26, the limitations of Claim 16 are disclosed as described above. Not disclosed is a support means that is a flower pot being in the object receiving space. Examiner takes official notice that it is old and notorious well known to place flower pots in disposable bags when discarding. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the collapsible container of Wardwell by using for discarding of flower pots (see Wardwell at col. 1 lines 1-4).

As to Claim 27, the limitations of Claim 25 are disclosed above. Not disclosed is the support means being an insert configured to conform to the contour of the inner side of the rigid segments. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to further modify the collapsible container of Wardwell as modified by filling completely with refuse (defined as the insert) which would conform to the inner contours of the rigid segments.

Request for model and/or interview

To expedite compact prosecution Examiner requests a model of the invention and/or an interview.

Response to Arguments

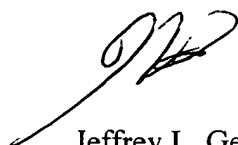
Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4, 11-14, 16-20, and 23-27 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

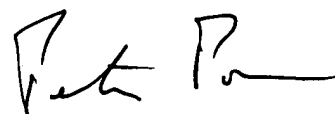
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Jeffrey L. Gellner whose phone number is 703.305.0053. The Examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. The Examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's Supervisor, Peter Poon, can be reached at 703.308.2574. The fax phone numbers for the Technology Center where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.305.7687, 703.305.3597, and 703.306.4195.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.308.1113.



Jeffrey L. Gellner



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